

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY MADRID NIACT IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMCONSUL NAPLES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1496

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NATO, SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH INTEREST IN SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS STATEMENT

REF: MADRID 1819

1. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION IN NAPLES ON MARCH 15, SECRETARY
GENERAL LUNS SAID: BEGIN QUOTE: IT IS A FACT WHICH HAS NOTHING
TO DO WITH THE REGIME IN SPAIN THAT SPAIN OCCUPIES A VERY IMPOR-
TANT STRATEGIC POSITION IN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN.
THERE IS THE BARRIER OF THE PYRENEES, THERE ARE THE NAVAL
BASES ON THE COAST OF SPAIN AND FINALLY THERE IS THE QUESTION
THAT SPAIN IS A NEIGHBOR OF FRANCE AND PORTUGAL. I WOULD SAY
JUST AS SPAIN WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE LAST WAR, ALTHOUGH IT
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DID NOT TAKE PART, IT DID PRESERVE ITS NEUTRALITY, SO IT
WILL BE HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT HOW SPAIN BEHAVES IN ANY FUTURE CONFLICT.
WE DO NOT DEAL WITH THE INTERNAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENTS OF COUNTRIES
EITHER IN THE ALLIANCE OR OUTSIDE THE ALLIANCE. SO I WOULD

NOT GET INTO EVALUATION OF THE SPANISH SYSTEM IN THE POLITICAL SENSE. I HAVE SAID THAT SPAIN IN THE MILITARY SENSE IS AN IMPORTANT COUNTRY AND IT HAS A LARGE ARMY AND THE FLEET HAS SOME NEW AND VERY FINE FIGHTING SHIPS. END QUOTE.

2. MARCH 17, THE NATO SPOKESMAN CATEGORICALLY DENIED PRESS REPORTS QUOTING SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS AS HAVING STATED THAT SPAIN MIGHT POSSIBLY BECOME A MEMBER OF NATO. DR. LUNS, TO THE CONTRARY, THE SPOKESMAN SAID, STATED AT HIS NAPLES PRESS CONFERENCE THAT, WITH REGARD TO SPAIN, SIGNATORIES OF THE NATO ALLIANCE MUST AGREE UNANIMOUSLY AND, THEREFORE, THE IDEA OF GETTING SPAIN INTO THE ALLIANCE WAS NOT REALISTIC. FYI, HE HAD BEEN ASKED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ALLIANCE UNDERTAKING NEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNTRIES OUTSIDE THE ALLIANCE SUCH AS SPAIN.

3. THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S STATEMENTS CLEARLY WERE NOT INTENDED AS SIGNALS BUT SIMPLY WERE RESPONSES TO JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS ON THE POSITION OF SPAIN.
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